

REMARKS

In response to the above-identified Office Action, Applicant amends the application and seeks reconsideration thereof. In this response, Applicant amends Claims 1, 3, 6, and cancels Claim 5. Applicant does not add any new claims. Accordingly, Claims 1-4, 6, and 8 are pending.

I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 6, and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable by U.S. Patent No. 6,314,052 issued to Foss, et al. ("Foss") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,349,122 issued to Woodman Jr. ("Woodman"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the Examiner must show the cited references, combined, teach or suggest each of the elements of a claim. Among other elements, amended Claim 1 recites "a first delay line ... for delaying a clock signal; a second delay line ... for delaying an output of the first delay line if a delay locking operation is not achieved in the first delay line; and a third delay line... for delaying an output of the second delay line if the delay locking operation is not achieved in the second delay line," "wherein the first delay is shorter than the second delay, and the second delay is shorter than the third delay." Applicant submits that Foss in view of Woodman at least does not teach these elements.

Foss at most teaches a tapped delay line having a plurality of unit delays. Each of the unit delays has the same length of delay (i.e., represented by an inverter). Foss discloses adjusting the delay such that the delay between the input clock signal and the output 29 is minimized (col. 2, lines 51-53, col. 3, lines 63-65). Foss does not disclose or suggest a delay locking operation using three different lengths of unit delays, but rather only mentions delay minimization using unit delays of equal length. Thus, Foss at least does not teach or suggest delaying a clock signal by a delay line having longer unit delays if a delay locking operation is not achieved by a previous delay line having shorter unit delays.

Woodman does not cure the deficiency of Foss. Woodman discloses a tapped delay line having 78 delay stages. Out of the 78 stages, 32 delay stages have a delay of approximately 1 ns each, and 46 delay stages have a delay of approximately 2 ns each. The Examiner has not identified and Applicant has been unable to discern the third delay stages as recited in amended Claim 1. Moreover, Woodman also does not teach or suggest that the device delays a clock signal by a delay line having longer unit delays if a delay locking operation is not achieved by a previous delay line having shorter unit delays. Rather, Woodman discloses that each of the delayed outputs (phases 0-3) is delayed through a pre-determined range of taps (col. 10, lines 3-21). The range of taps is independent of whether a delay locking operation is achieved in a previous stage.

Thus, assuming for the sake of argument that the delay line unit of Woodman could replace the delay line unit of Foss as suggested by the Examiner, there is nothing in the cited references that teaches or suggests that each of the first unit delay is shorter than each of the second unit delay, or that each of the second unit delay is shorter than each of the third unit delay. There is also nothing in the cited references that teaches or suggests delaying an output of a previous delay line if a delay locking operation is not achieved by the previous delay line. Thus, Foss in view of Woodman does not teach or suggest each of the elements of Claim 1. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of Claim 1 are requested.

Analogous discussion applies to Claims 3 and 6. Claims 2, 4, and 8 depend from Claims 1, 3, and 6, respectively. Thus, at least for the reasons mentioned above in regard to Claims 1, 3, and 6, Foss in view of Woodman does not teach or suggest each element of these dependent claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of Claims 1-4, 6, and 8 are respectfully requested.

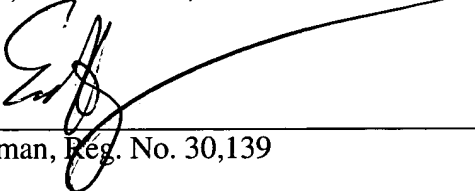
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now are now in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If there are any additional fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207 3800.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN-LLP

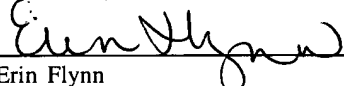
Dated: November 22, 2005


Eric S. Hyman, Reg. No. 30,139

12400 Wilshire Blvd.
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025
(310) 207-3800

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

 11/22/05
Erin Flynn Date